

REMARKS

The Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication by the Examiner that this application contains allowable subject matter. In particular, it is appreciated that the subject matter of original claims 6-9, 11, 13-14 and 17-19 has been indicated by the Examiner to be allowable in substance.

Accordingly, new claims are submitted containing the allowable subject matter. Claim 21 includes all of the limitations of original claim 6. Claim 22 includes the limitations of original claim 7. Claim 23 includes the limitations of claim 8. Similarly, new claims 24-26 contain the limitations of original claims 11, 13 and 14, respectively. Finally, new claim 27 includes the limitations of original claim 17.

All of these newly presented claims have already been indicated by the Examiner to be allowable, and it is respectfully submitted that claims 21-27 should be allowed.

The original claims have all been amended in a manner to clarify the present invention. Claim 1 specifically calls for the front and rear ironing board sections to have substantially equal length dimensions and for the length dimension of the ironing board as a whole to be substantially equal to twice the length of each of the front and rear sections. The lengths of the sections coincide in the folded storage position to minimize the stored length. As set forth throughout the specification, the advantages of this construction are many and significant in that it minimizes the package size, minimizes the space taken up on retail shelves and minimizes the space taken up during transportation and/or storage. These advantages are significant from a practical standpoint, particularly considering the premium that is placed on retail shelf space in the retail establishments that handle goods of this type.

Nothing similar is found in the prior art. The references upon which the Examiner relies as showing folding ironing boards are the patents to Brown, Held and Nestor. Referring first to

the Brown patent, it is clear from Fig. 4 in particular that the main ironing board section 10 is substantially longer than the extension section 11. Further, the length of the board as a whole when unfolded is well more than twice the length of the extension section 11 and considerably less than the length of the main section 10. Thus, if anything, Brown teaches away from the construction specifically set forth in amended claim 1.

The same is true of the Held and Nestor patents. The two sections 1 and 2 in the Held patent actually do not fold flatly upon one another at all. Instead, the section 11 only pivots to a limited extent (shown in Fig. 3 of the patent drawings), and this is so that the cover 13 can be easily applied to the ironing board. In any event, the sections 1 and 2 shown in the Held patent are significantly different in length, as is readily apparent. Finally, the short nose section 26 in the Nestor patent is nowhere near as long as the main section 24. Again, amended claim 1 is not remotely suggested by the Nestor construction.

For these reasons, amended claim 1 differs significantly from the prior art in a fundamental respect that creates significant practical advantages not even recognized in the prior art. Because the prior art does not recognize the problem of folding sections that are unequal in length and fails to recognize the advantages of constructing them in equal lengths, there is no motivation whatsoever in the prior art to modify the prior art structures to meet what is set forth in amended claim 1. In these circumstances, any rejection based on anticipation or obviousness is not well taken.

Consequently, claim 1 is submitted to be clearly allowable, along with dependent claims 2-9 which are allowable by reason of their dependence upon an allowable parent claim as well as on their own merits.

Amended claim 10 is an independent claim that calls for an ironing board that has both a leg structure allowing it to rest on the top surface of a table in a horizontal orientation and a

clamp mechanism allowing it to be clamped onto an edge portion of the table in a substantially horizontal orientation at a different location and in a different position than when it rests on the table top.

It is respectfully submitted that the prior art fails to teach anything similar. At most, the Brown patent simply clamps onto the front panel of an open drawer, as shown in Fig. 1 of the Brown patent. The Brown structure cannot be clamped onto a table edge at all and certainly cannot be clamped onto a table edge and, alternatively, placed on a table top in a horizontal orientation. There is no leg structure in the Brown patent that would accomplish the latter position.

Held is no more pertinent. While Held does teach a clamp that can be used to clamp the ironing board onto a table, it clearly lacks a leg structure which would allow it the alternative position of resting on a table top. While the Perry patent likewise can be clamped onto the edge of a table, it lacks any type of leg structure allowing it to be rested on top of the table surface in an alternative position. Furthermore, Perry requires the floor engaging leg X in addition to the clamp, a disadvantage that the present invention avoids.

Again, the alternative positions for the ironing board provided by amended claim 10 represent a significant improvement and result in practical advantages in that the ironing board can exhibit more versatility by allowing either position, depending upon the room that is available.

Claims 11-14 are dependent upon claim 1 and are allowable for this reason. Additionally, the Examiner has previously indicated that the subject matter of these claims is largely allowable on an independent basis.

Claim 16 has been amended only for clarification to indicate that the position of the ironing board is different when it is rested on top of the table surface on its leg structure and

when it is clamped to the table by a clamp mechanism which is included as part of the leg structure. As indicated above in connection with the discussion of amended claim 10, there is nothing in the prior art teaching an ironing board that can be used in these two alternative positions. Certainly, there is nothing teaching a leg structure that can be used to rest the ironing board on top of the surface and includes a clamp in the leg structure that can be used to clamp the ironing board onto the edge of the table. Consequently, amended claim 16 is clearly allowable, along with its dependent claims 17-19. Claim 20 has been canceled.

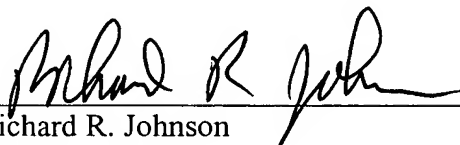
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are allowable and that this application is in full condition for allowance. A formal notice to that effect is requested in due course. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference will expedite the handling of this application, he is invited to call the number listed below at his convenience.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required to Deposit Account No. 11-0160.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

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